

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a single crystalline aluminum nitride film, comprising nitriding a single crystalline  $\alpha$ -Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> substrate to form ~~an~~ a single crystalline aluminum oxynitride layer and an aluminum nitride film directly on the single crystalline aluminum oxynitride layer.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the single crystalline  $\alpha$ -Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> substrate is nitrided by heating in the presence of carbon, nitrogen and carbon monoxide.

3. (Canceled)